

EVALUATION REPORT (\*)

LATIN AMERICAN WORK AND EDUCATION IDRC-CENEP NETWORK

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(\*) A preliminary version of the main conclusions of this evaluation was discussed with the Project Coordinators with the purpose of supporting the preparation of a proposal for Phase III.

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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Aim of the Evaluation

- 1.1 This document reports on the evaluation results of Phase II of the Latin American Education and Work Network project (3-P91-0067). This evaluation was requested by the Social Policy Program of IDRC's Social Sciences Division, in order to identify those elements which, as the project develops, can be used to design its third phase.
- 1.2 The evaluation is part of the general objectives being proposed for the social sciences area within the 1993-1996 Corporate Program Framework, as well as within the logic of criteria that guide the design of an action plan for research and development of social policies throughout Latin American and the Caribbean (Cfr. Social Policy in LAC Region. Integrated Program 1994-1996).
- 1.3 Said plan aims at strengthening research and development of social policies taking advantage of the experience acquired in several projects supported by IDRC and, based on these projects, promote the development of coordinated actions around a strategic common axis able to articulate production and communication of knowledge, planning and development of programs and policies, exchange actions and reciprocal learning.
- 1.4 The plan's central idea consists in optimizing the scarce resources available by strengthening research and development networks within the social policies field. Said networks would articulate a series of areas identified in subsequent planning exercises with researchers and decision makers, as well as results of projects having contributed to improving processes of generation and use of knowledge based on this research.
- 1.5 One such project is the Latin American Education and Work Network Project. At the present time in its second development phase, the project arose for the purpose of improving communication and interaction between researchers, planners and people responsible for policy implementation. Following four years of work, the project has been able to connect the different practices using a strategy favouring meetings between producers and users of knowledge amongst those who by having researched, advise and, by advising, influence decision making. For these purposes the more diverse means are being applied: associations and exchanges, research, a database, and a bulletin. A members network including people and institutions where, as we'll see later on, efforts are being jointly made for the realization of activities of common interest.

- 1.6 Given the experience accumulated by this project, it is hoped that it will serve as a 'model' to promote similar actions in other areas such as decentralization and evaluation of social policies.
- 1.7 It is also hoped that, in subsequent stages, this project will expand its scope to include topics relating to modernizing educational systems to bring them up to date and in line with the increasing demand for a greater articulation between education and the transformations taking place in productive systems throughout the countries of the region; also, to include the design of training policies and programs for workers as well as for micro, small and medium size concerns and for the youth excluded from participating in work opportunities due to their lacking specific skills.
- 1.8 When we say "model", what we assume is that knowledge, properly adapted, can be transferred. Also, that joining the worlds of research should bring about a cost reduction in learning while increasing output as a ratio of investments made. In practice, this means that experience accumulated by the Latin American Education and Work Network has lessons to teach in other areas of research and that, if well utilized, it can be taken as a study subject in other work areas. In this context, what this project has uncovered and developed could be used to support similar actions in other fields. On the other hand, some themes and priorities of educational research could be integrated for R&D purposes, in those fields we are now trying to strengthen.
- 1.9 The foregoing explains the objectives of this evaluation, which basically is focused on:
  - a) exploring experiences accumulated and examine the organization and activities of the project in the light of the elaboration of a proposal to continue aiming at a new development stage; and
  - b) examining the results of this experience to use them as inputs to strengthen other networks that, over the medium term, will take cover under the general umbrella of the Social Policies Program.

Terms of Reference, such as those previously referred to for the design of a Social Policies Network by IDRC, are included in annex 1.

## 2. Work Approach

Given the prospective nature of this evaluation and its aim to identify elements and strategies with which to formulate a

phase to continue, indicators of achievements and goals of the project are included in an annex. What we wish to underscore are those topics that contribute to the design of a III Phase based on the analysis of the following concepts:

- a) achievements and impact of project activities upon the development of new knowledge and design of programs and policies enabling to introduce changes while improving institutionalization the vocational training field;
- b) relationships of the project with other [projects] supported with IDRC resources and their relationship with others which, within this field, are supported by other agencies of international cooperation;
- c) sustainability, adaptability and transfer potential of lessons from the project to other situations or contexts,
- d) contribution of the project to the development of its field of knowledge and action and its current and potential areas of thematic concentration,
- e) (missing)
- f) outlines to be considered in designing and implementing a new phase and recommendations stemming from the conclusions of the evaluation.

### 3. Report Arrangement

As we have stated previously, this report has been organized in the following manner. In the first section, a summary of achievements and impact of the project by lines of action is given; second section deals with relationships with other networks and their perspectives are examined and, during a third, aspects referring to management and sustainable quality of the project are dealt with. The fourth section, deals with a possible profile of the project in the future, while incorporating aspects referring to the contribution of the project to the overall development of its field of knowledge and action. Lastly, the recommendations are contained in the fifth section.

The information proceeds from interviews held in July and August with researchers, administrators, international experts and network users in Santiago, Sao Paulo, Buenos Aires and Montevideo. Also from work meetings held with professionals from IDRC's regional office for Latin America and the Caribbean, and with the project coordinating team, and from reading reports and materials throughout the Network, which are also listed under annexes 2 and 3.

## I. ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT OF THE NETWORK BY ACTION LINES

In this section, achievements and the impact produced by the project by lines of action are analyzed. Particular emphasis is placed on the verifiable elements that make a difference between having and not having the Network as a project that promotes and facilitates research, dissemination, information and coordination of activities seeking to impact upon an equitable and sustainable development through a change in relationships currently predominating in the field of education and productive work.

The Network has about 400 members throughout twenty countries of the region; two groups specialize in research and development, one in the field of secondary education and technical and professional education and a third specializes in that area of education that deals with technological change. It also has an important number of related publications of research undertaken by these groups, a database and a service of bibliographical reference as well as a semestral bulletin. In addition, a considerable number of seminars and workshops arranged in coordination with other international cooperation agencies are also held.

Progress reports and results, which were prepared by its Coordination section are presented with great detail (Cfr. Annex #, numeral 1). Evolution and results of activities undertaken within each of its components are shown in great detail, namely:

- a) research
- b) information
- c) dissemination, and
- d) coordination

To the conclusions about each of these reference will be made in the following points:

### 1. Line of Research

- a) The Network was able to successfully place the theme of relationships between education and work in the agenda of academic debate and design of public policies well before this appeared as a priority topic for development in the region.
- b) It has favoured production, systematization and dissemination of knowledge in this field, having disseminated it towards relevant social actors in policy design and implementation of programs.

- c) It gathered senior researchers from recognized and prestigious universities and other centres of higher learning, from regional agencies and specialized agencies from the U.N. System, making possible a coordinated working effort among them.
- d) It is empowered to call regional meetings, and it is recognized by its members as a venue that facilitates exchanging experiences, coordination, reflection and joint work.
- e) It is also being recognized by its transversal quality and its capacity to mediate between actors and field institutions, as well as for its capacity to disseminate research results by holding seminars, workshops and vehicles such as the Bulletin.

With respect to the financial support provided to small research projects, it is given credit for having:

- a) supplemented national financial endeavours to tackle variables or themes not having originally financing from such sources as Conicet in Argentina, FINEP and FAPESP in Brazil and university centres in Mexico;
- b) supported the implementation of projects or doctoral thesis of young researchers, thus making training and development of replacement generations possible.
- c) been able, through a coordination effort, to produce, publish and disseminate several "must" reference works in leading areas such as secondary education, training and technological change as well as the compendium referring to challenges and research possibilities and policies for work and education during the nineties;
- d) established a synergic relationship between research, information and dissemination building upon common thematic axis although without using a common approach or methodological scheme enabling subsequent comparisons;
- e) transferred financial resources effectively and in good time, thus preventing delays in the development of supported projects and, quite frequently, making possible to continue with works while waiting for disbursement of national funds;

## 2. Information Line

The Network built a database for this purpose, initially collecting and compiling data in a more or less haphazard fashion and using its own descriptors. Used as an input for dissemination activities and the preparation of this bulletin,

this information consists, for the most part, of information provided by Network members; in other words, research which due to their specialized nature is not always captured by other services and information networks.

The gradual relationship established with networks and regional information and specialized services by field of activity (i.e. Reduc and Cinterfor), added to the existence of a very advanced and specialized Documentation Centre at the CENEP, lead us to consider the advisability of transferring the Database to the CENEP's institutional system and proceed to standardize descriptors on the basis of universal standards used by specialized agencies such as OIT and CEPAL. This work is presently in progress.

Concerning the use of the Database it was observed that:

- a) It was used and referred to with greater frequency by educators, administrators, researchers and students from Argentina. Its use by Network members from other countries is somewhat less than that of those who are geographically closer;
- b) for some of the Network researchers, the Database justifies its own function by the information it feeds to the Bulletin and other dissemination activities, more than by its use as a source of secondary information;
- c) for researchers in institutions that have E-Mail and other network sophisticated information systems, the best solution would be to incorporate our Database into those systems in order to ensure its use. Such is the case of SENAI, Campinas University, and the Carlos Chagas Foundation among others.
- d) for regional agencies such as CINTERFOR, which has a Training Regional Information System, the best solution would be to sign an agreement with the Network incorporating our Database into their system and maximizing its use by the member countries;
- e) since the Network Database is being gradually transferred to the CENEP's Documentation Centre standardizing its descriptors, the best solution from an outside viewpoint would be to keep it where it is and, from there, sign cooperation agreements with REDUC, CINTERFOR and other institutional networks so that to expand scope while opening its availability to the greatest number of potential users possible.



### 3. Dissemination and Publications Line

For these purposes, the Network has used a combination of strategies including:

- a) Indirect communication, through the Bulletin, the database alluded to before, publication of results of seminars and research undertakings which had been made possible thanks to financial contributions from third parties, supplementing the Network's own resources, as well as regular letter contacts with users.
- b) direct and interpersonal communication, by holding Seminars, Workshops and other activities where results of ongoing or completed research activities are disseminated as well as those from small projects supported by the Network, where financial contributions from third parties are also made.
- c) transfer of knowledge, through activities and technical assistance mechanisms and counselling that enable to use such knowledge by those who implement and develop policy planning.

When users were questioned about the validity and effectiveness of above strategies it was evident that:

#### 3.1 concerning the Bulletin

- a) in the case of researchers, the Bulletin is positively valued on account of the technical quality of its content and design, by the fact that it complements direct relationships and the contribution it makes to disseminating knowledge in its own field.
- b) with regard to administrators, the Bulletin permits them to update their knowledge and to familiarize themselves with predominant tendencies in the field, even though they consider that, given the requirements of management they value a more applied type of information than that of a strictly academic cut offered by the Bulletin. In this context, they appreciate more oral than written information, and would much prefer using a computerized database supplemented with the Bulletin.
- c) regarding members randomly selected to check their opinion, it became evident that many administrators and regional project coordinators are no longer in the same positions, being therefore difficult to follow up on the effects of the information, a revision and updating of the mailing list becoming necessary.

### 3.2 About Seminars and Workshops

Seminars and Workshops, whether to disseminate research results or to coordinate actions among researchers these are by far, the preferred form of dissemination by members of the Network, irrespective of their positions. In fact, should we have to decide among the different instruments, this would be by far the preferred one.

Likewise, should Network researchers undertake comparative projects it is deemed of crucial importance to its success that resources be put aside for meetings of coordination, seminars and gatherings. The key in all this, is to open a space to project administrators, planners, decision makers and other social participants in implementing training and development activities. Among these, representatives of labour unions and corporate management would be included.

### 3.3 About Technical Assistance

Regarding transfer of know-how, it should be mentioned that most of the researchers members of the Network act as consultants and technical advisers at the ministerial level, training centres, labour unions and international organizations. In the case of both Argentina and Brazil, there are coordination mechanisms and consulting contracts among this type of institutions and the Network's researchers. This also applies to Mexico and Colombia.

In general, and concerning this activity it was observed that:

- a) the use of knowledge and the legitimation of new ideas has been made possible in all cases in which researchers coordinate their work with administrators, give to their studies a character of strategic research or derive from their studies recommendations for policy design;
- b) the impact of results from research and use of information is in direct relationship to the prestige and credibility attained by the researchers themselves, which is not necessarily related to the institutions where they work;
- c) there is a tendency among those who implement programs to use same consulting capacities from existing networks, minimizing possibilities to incorporate new ideas and people as well as the development and deployment of a replacement generation. And this is becoming progressively worse as relationship ties between performers and researchers prevent renewal of ideas and policy innovation from taking place.

In view of this, and given the amount of knowledge accumulated by the Network about availability of technical capacities in the area, this finds itself in a privileged position to offer and provide

international consulting services and technical know-how identifying requirements, proposing experts and expanding closed circuits leading to the concentration of these opportunities in the few who have access to them (effective use of the know-how and know-whom) (sic).

### 3.4 About Network publications

In supporting actions of technical assistance, the Network publications, on account of the quality of its content are a necessary element of reference for universities, research centres, training institutes, and international agencies in general.

This is a factor explaining the interest of other networks in associating themselves with the Network and contributing with complementary resources towards achieving their own objectives of communication and dissemination. Most, if not all, of the Network publications have become a reality in association with third parties and on the basis of shared costs.

In this connection it must be noted that:

- a) the acknowledged impact of the Network in the field of dissemination of research results through publications can only be measured as a function of what has been accomplished with other contributions;
- b) in negotiating additional resources, Coordination's role and that of the researchers have been paramount;
- c) contributions made by national and international institutions towards publications and seminars, represent a significant amount of resources which must be accounted for as counterpart contributions to the project, together with IDRC's.

## II. RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER NETWORKS

### 1. Relationship with networks from multilateral organizations

The element that has characterized the relationship of the Network with other networks throughout Latin America is the principle of strategic associations. In other words, joining efforts and resources to carry out a common project which, in most cases, has materialized in joint publications, holding seminars and participation of Network members in dissemination or technical assistance activities. This is the case of relationships with such regional networks as:

- a) The OAS' Education and Work network (PMET-OAS) where the invitation to Coordination or to members of the Network to take part in workshops, panels and round tables has been predominant;
- b) UNESCO/OREALC and IIEP/UNESCO; in the first case the relationship has translated itself into contributions towards publication of research results, holding seminars and the utilization of Network researchers in support of their regional programs. In the second case, into an association to undertake teaching programs in the area;
- c) OIT/CINTERFOR, as in the previous case, the Network and Cinterfor have become associated to publish research results and to undertake joint training seminars and workshops;
- d) UNICEF, with which links have been recently established towards carrying out activities of youth training in high risk activities.

## 2. Relations with extra-regional networks.

The Network's association with its matching homologues throughout the world has been less frequent. This type of relationship would be highly productive, because both would share interests and problems requiring the search for common solutions. In this sense:

- a) although the Network has established links with institutions and individuals outside the region, as is the case with NORRAG which disseminates information provided by the Network, it would be advisable to explore association possibilities in order to develop joint actions;
- b) In Canada, there are associations embracing universities, NGOs, colleges and technical training centres, which might benefit from contributions countries from the South might make, both learning from their respective contributions and innovations. In this sense, perhaps association possibilities ought to be explored between the Network and its homologues in Canada in order to identify cooperation areas and financing sources;
- c) finally, but not less important, interfacing or articulating with centres and networks from northern countries, whose practical objectives are the same, might very well serve as basis for the dissemination of research results and conclusions among Network members and to identify common problems requiring also common approaches towards their solution.

### 3. Relationship with IDRC's Social Policies Network

The convergence of Network actions with those of IDRC's Social Policies might be of key importance, is now completing its first development phase. As both are in different stages of their development, they might benefit from reciprocal learning with the following advantages and disadvantages:

#### 2.1 Advantages of inserting the Network into the Social Policy Network (SPN)

The gradual articulation of the Network into IDRC's Social Policies Program, might favour the leadership of the Network provided it offers the following advantages:

- a) take advantage of the Network's accumulated experience to complement and create new networks while strengthening their own coordination and information systems;
- b) expand their coverage and impact possibilities, by linking its activities with those of IDRC's Social Policies Program;
- c) promote research in related areas to those of the Network or in topics of policy evaluation, favouring comparability, use of multiple and interdisciplinary approaches and the efficient use of the scarce resources available;
- d) offering participation possibilities in follow-up activities, evaluation and training in policy management and education programs within the social policies framework;
- e) incite institutional support commitments towards capturing additional sources of financing ensuring continuity of actions;
- f) facilitate coordination of information and dissemination systems to achieve a greater impact.

#### 2.2 Disadvantages of insertion into the SPN

By contrast, in order to prevent them, the following disadvantages of this operation should be taken into account:

- a) Loss of autonomy and operativeness, as well as bureaucratization of the decision making process;

- b) Possible wish for protagonism of a specialty area above others as the only Network able to Coordinate Social Policies;
- c) Loss of visibility and of operational levels reached by the Network, especially in its cooperation relationship with third parties;
- d) Risk of increasing operational costs unless there is an action plan with objectives and goals at short and medium term.

The Network has acquired a substantial experience in management and coordination of research, information and dissemination activities that may serve to inspire other groups. Amongst its strong points, which can be replicated, the following deserve special mention:

- a) its role as facilitator and articulator of regional activities;
- b) its capacity to promote and supplement actions and strengthen groups and R&D areas, from the world of the education sciences and sociology of work;
- c) regional coverage, which includes not only countries but regions and relevant institutions within the countries themselves for vocational training and training and development;
- d) promote policies and programs based on the use of applied knowledge;
- e) having created mechanisms and instruments to bring about a greater and better use of the information and knowledge available.

It is obvious that, on this basis, we can hope for an increase in the possibilities of impacting and for a greater coverage by above actions. This would require, however, concerted actions, financial commitment enabling to plan with vision over the medium term, management teams able to mobilize additional resources and a consolidation work and improvement of what has been achieved and of innovation in research, management and coordination of this project.

### III. COORDINATION, INSTITUTIONAL BASIS AND NETWORK SUSTAINABILITY

#### 1. Origin of the Network

The Network Project began in 1987 with preparation and implementation activities. In 1990, phase I of the Project began, and in 1991

the Latin American Education and Work Seminar was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where links with most of the researchers who at present are part of specialized working groups were established. The future coordination strategy was also designed there; areas of thematic concentration were decided upon and the manner in which the fund for small research projects would be administered.

## 2. Institutional and Membership Base

Institutionally, the Network depends on CENEP, independent academic centre specializing in topics of population and development. Of recognized prestige in fields including migrations, employment, labour market, mortality, fertility, education, etc., CENEP operates as a research cooperative, financed by outside sources and consulting contracts. Each project considers an overhead to financed the fixed expenses of the institution and administration costs.

The Network is one of the projects CENEP administers: Its coordination is by four professionals: the coordinator of the project, a documentation manager, an executive assistant and a partial time researcher, who is responsible for the production and publication of the Bulletin. It also has the voluntary cooperation of some Network members, under the modality of what has been called "informal consultative group". This group makes contributions in specific areas (i.e. production of opinion articles, project evaluation, etc.).

Following groups are the principal members of the Network:

- a) researchers, who belong to specialized groups, acting regular or sporadically as part of the coordination team;
- b) administrators and planners, users of knowledge and the information produced by the project, participating in Seminars and Workshops organized by the Network;
- c) regional agencies, United Nations specialized agencies and international officials cooperating in activities of the Network and associating themselves in projects of common interest;
- d) Officials from the Ministries of Education and Labour, and related institutions, incorporated into the Network following their participation in Seminars, due to having had access to the Bulletin or through direct contacts with associated researchers, etc.
- e) a small number of affiliated members from industry and labour unions, which is considered proportionally low and whose proportionality in the opinion of some members should increase in the future.

Most members have joined the Network has a result of a personal decision to do so.

Said members do not represent the institutions to which they belong even though, in many cases, they act on their behalf and negotiate institutional resources for the development of activities in conjunction with the Network (i.e. Die in Mexico, Unicamp in Campiñas, Senai in Brazil, etc.). In fact, this mechanism has proved itself to be the most agile and effective in undertaking joint initiatives carried out as seminars, workshops and some projects of common interest.

Membership is easy. A letter of application is sufficient. The Network has a list of members and points of contact with them. However, beginning with the selection of members to be interviewed for evaluation purposes, an interrogant arises as to the degree in which we are able to keep up to date data about members and information about their interest to remain connected with the activities of the Network. In this sense, revising membership lists to introduce changes in members' positions and address is an imperative of resource rationalization and that of enlarging the range of members to individuals interested in joining the Network, people who do not know the mechanisms to join (i.e. post graduate students of Mexico's Iberoamericana University).

### 3. Project Management

The management of the project rests with the Coordination team. This is recognized by all as the axis and operating engine of the Network. Likewise, all recognize a fluid and effective management of resources which has been able "to do a great deal with very little".

The Network's credibility is attributed, to a great extent, to the transparency and effectiveness with which its resources are administered, and to the objectivity with which the projects it supports are being evaluated, to the effectiveness and prestige of researchers-members and to the proven capacity to produce and disseminate useful knowledge for policy design. In the words of an interviewee, the Network is highly appreciated because it shows results acting as demonstrators. Products published so far have lead others to attempt to disseminate their own works because, to the extent that the Network becomes associated with organizations of regional influence for the production of its publications, its coverage has expanded both regionally and extra-regionally.

### 4. Support Base

The work of promoting and attracting members for these purposes, negotiating additional resources for Seminars and Workshops,



coordinating research groups and ensuring, in general, the good operation of work lines it is a responsibility of the group coordinating the Network. It is a management work, highly appreciated by all, but heavy and exacting on account of the coordination that must be made of relations at regional level, identification of financing sources, capturing resources and supervision of activities. In this sense, CENEP supports and administers, satisfies minimum infrastructure requirements offering a space of recognized pluralism and academic prestige beyond all discussion. Following present policies, the project is administered as one more among the several being implemented there.

If what is expected from CENEP is what it has been giving, CENEP is a solid institutional base. If we wish to consolidate and expand the Network's activities it will be necessary to think in a mechanism enabling to support management and coordination work but, particularly, cooperate in identifying and securing resources ensuring its operation over the short and medium term.

A possible solution might be found in creating an Advisory Group made up by managers of specialized agencies and institutions able to follow through this process and committing themselves to the search for resources to operate the Network.

There is also another alternative: that of becoming associated through agreements or conventions with institutions or agencies handling national funds for R&D development. And that to obtain resources complementing contributions made by international cooperators, with which to provide international consulting services to the public and private sectors.

Until now, the search for financial resources to complement IDRC's contribution has primarily been a responsibility of the Network Coordination which, with great prudence has defined a realist scope of contacts and coverage in order to be efficient as to quality. By this means, a thematic identity, regional visibility, autonomy and work operational efficiency have been advised.

A qualitative leap forward requires new management and coordination mechanisms as well as greater resources enabling to pass from what we may call "handicraft" work to designing institutional strategies enabling to expand our scope, incorporate new actors with capacity to influence policy formulation, decision making as well as defining systems and legal frameworks to increase education to the level of requirements being imposed by the productive system.

Consolidating and improving what has been achieved is an activity currently in progress. The gradual transfer of the Database to the CENEP's Documentation Centre, standardization of descriptors for its universalization, dissemination of research results at the different levels, as well as continuing with the Bulletin are process indicators. However, sustainability of actions depends to

a great extent upon the possibilities for securing new resources and upon the flexibility the Coordination of the Network may have to design projects comparable and susceptible to replication and, at the same time, attracting the users' interest.

The support IDRC may provide in this field, and that which other activities may provide to mobilize resources are key elements for making this project self-sustainable.

#### IV. OUTLINES FOR ELABORATING THE NEXT PHASE OF THE LATIN AMERICAN EDUCATION AND WORK NETWORK

##### 1. Profile of the Project

Considering what has been said previously, it can be said that the Network has over-achieved the objectives it has put for itself in phases I and II. With regard to the latter, which is the subject of this evaluation, indicators of the achievement degree are evident, having surpassed quite frequently the overall objectives proposed for the phase.

Having completed one stage, we can correctly say that "moving the Network beyond its present situation (...) maintaining a relevant profile in order to respond to education and work themes from a non-traditional perspective is imperative, while granting it a leadership role (in its field of action)".

If something favours the Network to advance in this direction is its study purpose and its scope. Education and work are in a direct relationship with the people, this being the most important resource on which countries count at the present time: for their training and development, and for their own potential to create "more intelligent working ways" and use of knowledge as the fulcrum for an equity transformation unit.

In fact, there is a conviction that among factors that influence productivity most, perhaps the most transcendental, is education. This conviction, universally shared, has lead to considering the importance of increasing knowledge and the capacity of people and to the adoption of policies where the correct investment in education seems, clearly, as the most effective of all social investments any country can make.

In the previous context, there are many countries that decided upon education as the first development priority. This includes education at its basic levels, technical and professional training, technological training, and vocational training. It is also of interest investing in strengthening the training capacity of the productive sector and in defining strategies to train workers, technical and management groups in order to take advantage of opportunities for concentrating in places better suited to use them

economically and efficiently.

The Network was a pioneer in tackling some of these topics with relatively scarce financial resources. Given the capacity of member researchers and resources available for the small project fund, it was able to contribute towards accumulating the critical funds necessary to cope with technological change, with changes and with the requirements restructuring the productive systems imposes upon the educational system. To this end, the Network used institutional capacities and promoted the participation of young researchers in the development of experimental projects. This was successfully implemented; research results were disseminated providing a better understanding of:

- a) the characteristics of the technological change that is taking place in some Latin American countries, and the consequences this entails for the scope of qualifications and professional training;
- b) requirements being imposed upon secondary education systems, particularly upon the professional-technical level, starting with the diagnosis of their failures and changes operated in the structure of qualifications and productive systems in general.

Moving the Network beyond its present position, from a perspective of redefining its profile and positioning its leadership, requires:

#### 1.1 over the short term:

- a) consolidate what has been achieved in the field of information and in the use of knowledge, extending its scope towards planners, decision makers and people responsible for implementing national and international policies;
- b) improving the database and information systems; coordinate with other networks and take advantage of spaces these offer to gain access to relevant social actors;
- c) theme innovation, research approaches and strategies to tackle problems of global and interregional interest, favouring comparisons between countries and regions, while facilitating improving and promotion of young researchers.

#### 1.2 over the medium and long term

The goal is to achieve a network that is consolidated, with a regular budget proceeding from diversified sources and with an operating capacity enabling it to act as:

- a) a regional forum for the exchange and debate of ideas among its members through seminars, workshops, consultation and lectures or conferences;
- b) a promoter, able to promote the application of new knowledge in educational and work policies and programs implemented by State, regional and local governments, the private sector and labour unions;
- c) a partner, able to promote and support the design and implementation of research undertakings as well as facilitating associations to implement policies and programs;
- d) a broker, who identifies financing sources able to capture resources for research and development in the education and work education field.

At international level, the consolidated Network should:

- a) lead the transfer of ideas and regional approaches to fora where R & D policies, priorities and schedules are being decided upon;
- b) offer technical training and assistance to design and administration of innovative programs which, by articulating education and work, converge to achieve the objectives of equity development;
- c) identify successful experiences and approaches, from the point of view of their design and management which, once evaluated could be adapted to other contexts and regions; and
- d) attract, as basis for human resources, administrators, planners, educators and technicians from the public and private sectors, from civil and professional associations, to promote concerted actions and use their capacities in projects of common interest.

The Project's Work plan and its goals, should take these objectives as basis for its programming.

## 2. Strategy

Network positioning under such terms requires a strategy enabling to tackle, in successive stages, the necessary transformations in the operation of the project. On the basis of analysis and evaluation of achievements made until now it is possible to identify and characterize some outlines to be considered in the design of a third phase. Said outlines include the following:

## 2.1 within the research component

While the Network has been able to fill a vacuum in the R & D field, call on researchers with regional influence and proven record to build a future research system able to:

- a) act as a counterpart of national research financing institutions, capturing resources for undertaking joint projects. This implies establishing tripartite agreements among those implementing projects, national financing agencies, and the network where each contributes with their own specific aport.
- b) maintain the administration of a "fund for small projects" to be used in supporting training young researchers in the field. This, provided they have personal and institutional backing from trained researchers so that to prevent monitoring costs shouldered by Coordination;
- c) promote design and implementation of comparative regional projects, using institutional resources and capacities of member-researchers of the Network and putting under CENEP's supervision general project coordination tasks and the search for the resources necessary to facilitate coordination and synthesis meetings and other events to disseminate results;
- d) assign financial resources from the project's new phase for exchange and acquaintance missions of counterparts in other areas and to promote associations with corresponding counterparts abroad in order to, by acting jointly, seek the necessary resources to implement cooperative projects;
- e) leave under CENEP's responsibility, the management, coordination, promotion and follow-up of dissemination results, identification of new projects and programs, and establish personal contacts with researchers and institutions working in the field.

## 2.2 within the component of information and consulting services

This is a field in which, from an outside point of view as well as from evaluations performed by the Network, a sub-utilization of documentation and advisory services is taking place and this is mainly due to problems resulting from lacking an electronic network integrated system enabling network consultation and transmission of documents.

It is in this line where the interest of other regional networks to become associated with the CENEP Network can be seen more clearly and where, the latter has recognized that the volume of information

seems to demand a qualitative change enabling to give a greater backing and regional dissemination to the more than 2500 titles entered into the databank among the different membership organizations and, especially, to those responsible for planning and implementing policies and programs in this field.

In this sense it is pertinent to think in terms of:

- a) an association, through conventions or agreements, between the Network and other institutions having national and regional databases in order to facilitate bibliographic consultation from anywhere in the country or from any other country within the region through electronic means (amongst these Reduc/Cide, Sifro/Cinterfor, Redelet/Brasil, Crefal/Mexico);
- b) the possibility of soliciting support from IDRC's informatics division to incorporate CENEP's database into the Master Network, given the efforts made by the Network to standardize its database, using universally known descriptors and the reclassification of material according to the Thesaurus of specialized agencies of the United Nations System. In fact, this database would complement others in this international project and would permit the Network to design mechanisms to project the information regionally available while maximizing its relationship with other networks and specialized agencies operating in the region.
- c) coordinate efforts for the gradual transfer of CENEP processed information to other networks operating in the region having the financial resources necessary to operate a sustainable base with inputs which will continue flowing from members of the Network.

### 2.3 with respect to the dissemination and publication component

The six volumes of excellent content and quality, jointly published with the help provided by specialized agencies, or sponsorships obtained through Network researchers, give an account of achievements in this line. An important part of these, are the result of seminars and workshops organized beginning with the work of results from research groups and that of researchers supported with resources from the small project fund.

It is in these activities where the Coordination of the Network has played a more complete role as a broker trying to obtain resources with which to organize seminars and workshops, and to coordinate publications to disseminate results of research undertakings.

In this sense, it would be advisable:

- a) to involve more actively, from the Coordination of the Network with its own researchers, up to and including institutions busy in sponsoring and staging seminars, meetings and workshops, while coparticipating in the publication and dissemination of results;
- b) identify potential members as sponsors of the Network among company associations and other members of the civil society that could provide financial resources to undertake studies, contract technical assistance services paying for subscriptions as users of the bulletin;
- c) incorporate as members and sponsors of the Network some specialized agencies of the United Nations System who may act, at the same time, by contracting services and identifying sources of financing to undertake studies and consulting services;
- d) associate with IDRC's Social Policies Network to bring about the mutual participation of members in activities of common interest, particularly in the field of evaluation of social policies and training in handling same;
- e) develop a roster of experts in the field and organize the formal offer of advisory services by members of the Network, aiming at satisfying requirements of governments and international institutions, private corporations and civil associations, as well as demands originating with institutions which participate as members of similar network, inside and outside IDRC; and
- f) maintain the organization of these activities, and coordination of publications, including the Bulletin, in the hands of the Network in order to maintain the logic of the project while favouring the achievement of its objectives.

In terms of a project, the Network is poised to undertake the preceding actions. The nearest group of member-researchers is ready to support the search for resources to carry out activities at the national level, and it is deemed that the moment has arrived to undertake comparative projects starting with knowledge accumulated from case studies and diagnostics performed until now.

However, this required an institutional effort by the CENEP to:

- a) Design and implement a financing strategy able to continue financing the project once the third phase is concluded, and
- b) at the end of said phase, self-establish a goal with a fix budget made up by three different contributory sources: National sponsoring institutions, international cooperation specialized agencies and funds proceeding from advisory and training services provided to end users.

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the results achieved following the implementation of this project and the elements of this evaluation, it is hereby recommended that:

### 1. With respect to continuous IDRC financing:

- a) to continue with the support it has been providing to the Network Project since its inception until now, as long as it demonstrates to be an appropriate and effective mechanism to produce new knowledge in the area of education and work and disseminate it effectively amongst people responsible for implementing policies and programs;
- b) to finance a third phase lasting a minimum of two years and a maximum of five, in order to bring about the consolidation and improvement of information lines and dissemination of the Network, innovation in educational research and, above all, design and implement a strategy seeking supplementary resources over the medium term. Said resources should come from national sources, through promotion and signature of cooperation agreements, from international sources via cooperative project development associations, and from the Network users themselves, through support and consulting services;
- c) to facilitate contacts and the necessary information to coordinate CENEP and its members, access to financial resources with which to undertake research projects, and to contact pertinent counterparts abroad with a view to promote associations.
- d) to facilitate coordinating the Network Project with other networks being supported within the framework of R&D policies promoted by IDRC and with those other international organizations who have delegated upon said Centre the implementation of evaluation projects of social policy and institutional strengthening for handling same.

### 2. With regard to sustainability over the medium term, it is recommended that CENEPT,

- a) assume an institutional commitment in the strategy to search for the necessary resources to maintain the Network in operation beyond the period covered by the third phase;
- b) provide the Network Project with the necessary infrastructure to operate among its homologues, and the



necessary institutional backing to sign conventions and agreements with bilateral and multilateral institutions, and with the public sector and private associations.

3. With respect to its management, Coordination [of the Network] is recommended:
  - a) to expand and explore research lines, introducing the comparability factor in projects in order to achieve a greater regional impact despite the scarce resources on hand;
  - b) to expand participation by planners, decision makers and administrators in identifying priorities and research areas in order to strengthen articulation between research and implementation and design of educational and working policies;
  - c) to design mechanisms to request support from sponsoring Network members, able to provide resources for its operation through regular contributions or through contracting consulting and specialist services and studies;
  - d) among sponsors of the Network, identify those who, from their own positions, might act as part of an Advisory Group, without any cost to the Project, and be responsible for helping to determine priorities and for identifying financing sources to develop new research and dissemination activities;
  - e) revise the list of Network members to bring it up to date and expand and strengthen relationships with its users on the basis of an offer of services including, from the use of the Bulletin to providing consulting services under contract;
  - f) delegate in third parties, under agreement, information and documentation tasks, reserving for the Network the elaboration of a database that include "who's who" as experts in the field of design and implementation of policies to harmonize education and work;
  - g) maintain as an activity inherent in managing and coordinating the Network tasks of research undertakings and those resulting from dissemination, publication and advisory services requested by third parties, whether public or private, as well as other having relation to training in policy management, production of materials and teaching inside and outside the region.

## ANNEX #1

### TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE IDRC-CENEP LATIN AMERICAN EDUCATION AND WORK PROJECT

#### 1. Objectives

Evaluate activities and organization of the Latin American Education and Work Network and elaborate recommendations for its future.

These recommendations will be useful in helping the decisions IDRC may have to make in connection with the future of the Network. Also, they must contribute to a better elaboration of a project for a possible third phase, the preparation of which will be in the hands of its Coordination [group].

#### 2. Schedule

Three months (3) starting July 1, the final report being delivered September 30, 1994

#### 3. Tasks to be Performed

Bearing in mind the objectives of the Network's second phase, defined in the Memorandum of Grant Conditions, the evaluator must perform the following tasks:

- a) final development of evaluation criteria being undertaken jointly with the Coordination service of the Network and IDRC. Said criteria will refer to original objectives of phase II and to research, information, dissemination and advisory activities developing within it;
- b) Reading and evaluating publications and reports pertaining to the Network's II phase (July 1991 - May 1994). The evaluation will be made in terms of presentation, content, form and dissemination;
- c) Interviews with people making up the Network's Coordination service and with a number of active members of said Network in Santiago, Buenos Aires and Sao Paulo (....) The directive for said interviews will include following topics:
  - current structure of the Network and suggestions for Phase III;
  - communication and decision making mechanisms;
  - relationships with other networks;
  - topics dealt with and new themes to be added;
  - expansion of institutional participation
  - results of research undertakings
  - usefulness of the Bulletin

- access to CENEP's database
  - usefulness of small projects;
- d) Application of a questionnaire via fax or E-Mail to a sample of Network participants. The questionnaire's content will be determined on the basis of results of interviews;
- e) Contribute to the preparation of a proposal for phase III of the Network, with discussions and comments about preliminary texts being elaborated by Coordination;
- f) Elaborate a final evaluation report. This report will include recommendations for a possible new stage. Said report should include:
- adapting the Network's objectives to the reality of the region and to present state of knowledge about education and work;
  - quality and relevance of activities carried out; and
  - relationship between objectives, activities, mechanisms and products of the Network.

## ANNEX # 2

### 1. LIST OF MATERIALS AND NETWORK PUBLICATIONS REVISED FOR THEIR EVALUATION

- Executive Summary of the Network and Final Report, Phase II, July 1991 - May 1994;
- Basis for taking part in the small projects competition, elaborated in 1992;
- Report of Activities undertaken to normalize the Database between June and July 1994;
- Education and Work. Bulletins of the IDRC-CENEP Latin American Education and Work Network. Nine issues published until now;
- Papers presented during the Seminar entitled "Education and Work before the XXI century challenges", held in Buenos Aires in April 1994;
- Education and Work. Challenges and perspectives in research and policies for the nineties. Reader prepared with papers presented at the Seminar of same name held in Buenos Aires in July 1991;
- Democracy and Productivity. Challenges resulting from a new secondary education in Latin America. Joint publication Unesco/Orealc, IDRC/Cenep, Seminar papers and debate taking place in Tepoztlan, Mexico, in October 1992;
- articles prepared for the book entitled Productive Restructuring, Work and Education in Latin America, in preparation, elaborated with papers from the seminar held at the Campinas University, Brazil, in March 1993;
- Industry and Technical School. Two Mexican experiences. Joint publication Unesco/Orealc, IDRC/CENEP and SNTE Foundation;
- Self education to Work in Mercosur. Situation and Challenges; several authors, Joint publication PNET/OEA;

### 2. IDRC REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

- Memorandum of Grant Conditions, Phase II & Project Summary Education and Work Network, Phase II;
- Empowerment through knowledge. Strategy of the International Development Research Centre, 1991;
- IDRC, Corporate Program Framework, 1993-1996;
- Social Policy in LAC Region. Integrated Program 1994-1996 (Draft Document)
- Research on Social Policies. Proposals for an agenda, 1994; and
- Draft Reports on On-Going Activities of the Social Policy Research Network.

ANNEX #3.

INTERVIEWS

1. With the Network Coordination Team
2. With researchers affiliated to the Network
  - a) in Buenos Aires (5)
  - b) in Sao Paulo (4)
  - c) in Campinas (1)
  - d) in Santiago (3)
  - e) in Montevideo (1)
  - f) via fax/Mexico (3)
3. With Network users
  - a) in Buenos Aires (2)
  - b) in Sao Paulo (2)
  - c) in Montevideo (2)
4. With the beneficiaries from the small projects fund
  - a) in Buenos Aires (1)
  - b) in Sao Paulo (1)
  - c) In Campinas (1)
5. With members of international organizations cooperating with the Network:
  - a) Unesco/Orealc (1)
  - b) OIT/CINTERFOR (2)
  - c) PMET/OEA (1)
  - d) OIT/Santiago (1)
6. With authorities and officials of the Regional IDRC Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (2).